

and I watched them for some time feeding on the pine cones. Never having seen the bird in life before, I had some trouble in making out what they were, but at last decided that they were Crossbills. After that I often saw them, and in fact they became quite common, and remained here until the middle of May. I only killed one (an old male) and now have the skin in my collection. Whenever seen they were invariably in the pine trees and never still long at a time.—I. F. ARNOW, *St. Marys, Ga.*

**Nesting of Crossbills in Colorado.**—The paper by Rev. P. B. Peabody in the July number of 'The Auk,' on the nesting of the Bendire Crossbill in Wyoming led me to look through the notes of Denis Gale, who spent the years from 1883 to 1893 inclusive in the mountains of Boulder County closely observing our mountain birds. These notes are now owned by the University of Colorado, and have been transcribed, annotated and indexed for convenient reference, forming 278 pages, exclusive of index. I find few references to Crossbills, and only in 1893 are there definite notes of their nesting habits, though under date May 21, 1890, he does say that he saw that day a family of these birds with "young fully grown nearly." All of his references are to the American Crossbill, but doubtless those he saw were *Loxia curvirostra bendirei*, a subspecies likely unknown to him. He was well along in years at that time, and had learned his ornithology at a much earlier period. I extract the following from his notes:

"March 28, [1893] 172 [= Smithsonian Check List No., Bull. 21, U. S. Nat. Mus., 1881]. In this locality saw crossbills to all appearances looking for exact site or having already begun to build, but not in earnest, as I watched them a long time without results."

"March 31. 172. The pair of crossbills noted on the 28th inst. were evidently resting from their labors, having completed their nest building. Now I come to think of it their demeanor said as much. I regret not witnessing the building operation which I believe was wholly undertaken by the female. Locality, a sheltered hillside east of Buckhorn Mountain, on north side of clump of scattered coniferous trees, in pine tree about 18 feet from the ground, saddled on horizontal branch 5 feet from main stem and 4 feet from end of branch, the nest shielded on the weather side by part of another branch from below, and yet immediately underneath the nest could be easily seen, although the site would be easily overlooked, if indeed it would be examined at all, it being in a general way the least likely tree to be selected for nesting, a number of others more sheltered and offering better hiding being at hand. Upon approaching the belt of scattered timber I stood several minutes looking to the center of further edge to see if I could discover the bird carrying building material, in which direction I had supposed the nest site selected from the manner of the birds I had previously watched, instead of which I was within a few feet of the tree the nest was located in. The male suddenly lit upon the top of a tree. At a greater distance no doubt he had seen my intrusion and become alarmed. I saw at once by his anxious manner that he was to be watched,

so I stood still, keeping him in view. In two minutes he flew a little quartering toward me to another tree top, and in less than half a minute flew toward the nest site and when within two feet of it the female joined him and flew off. The apparition of the female led me to examine the location of her exit from the tree, when I plainly saw the nest. Intending to watch matters I walked off 20 or 25 yards and sat down. Upon doing so I saw the male on a twig close to the nest. I did not see the female at all, whom he must have conducted back to the nest. His stay there was momentary. I only had time as I turned around to get a glimpse of him as he flew away. Still of opinion that they were building or completing their nest I waited and watched for nearly two hours and went away intending to return. Upon my return, as before I went away, I struck the tree trunk and some of its lower branches, but the female did not flush. I climbed the tree and discovered the female sitting close. I reached out and rudely shook a spray with two or three pine tassels on it which were immediately over the nest, to no purpose. She trembled but would not fly off until I poked her with my finger. She was covering two eggs. After leaving the nest I watched. It was fully ten minutes from one tree top before she crossed the site to another tree and after two minutes more she again settled on the nest. I did not see the male anywhere about except for an instant, after his unnecessary anxiety gave his mate away. While building the nest I believe, as with some other birds, this species' nest can be located, and in no other way unless given away by the male. Accident brought the male to the nest locality just as I happened to be near the spot, otherwise it was 100 chances to one I had not discovered it."

"April 3. 172. Took nest and 3 eggs to-day. Watched the male feeding female at long intervals,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 hours. He seemed to fly some distance away. Was not present when the nest and eggs were taken. Eggs were covered from the first laying, to prevent their being chilled I presume. The male seemed very devoted to his mate and likewise the female to her nest and eggs. Measurements of nest as follows: 5 in. wide,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  in. deep, outside;  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in. deep,  $2\frac{3}{8}$  in. wide, inside. Dimensions taken on the spot, therefore correct. Composition of nest: Foundation a few twigs, with stiff, strong plant stems, some of the latter stayed through the body or wall in which is felted a few fine grass stems, with much plant fiber, species of wild hemp [?], the same somewhat finer with a few feathers felted in for inside lining, which feels a little harsh. The structure is light but well knit together; warm, without being very dense. Should think it took at least a week to construct. Saddled upon bough  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches thick, well protected by laterals. Eggs slightly incubated. No additional eggs intended. Measurements of eggs: .69 + .44, .70 + .44, .72 + .54 in. ...."

"May 8. 172. At Fred Ehler's and on hillside, Zieman's Gulch, saw young and old birds together feeding on pine seeds, the old birds searching the pine cones."

Although Mr. Gale spent most of his time in the field during the nesting

season these are the only definite notes connected with the nesting of the crossbills in all the 278 pages. I may add that although I spend a little time in the coniferous forests of our mountains up to timber line each year I have never seen any crossbills. Dr. Ridgway, in Part 1 of his new work on 'Birds of North and Middle America,' notes several breeding records of *L. c. bendirei*, published under the names *L. c. americana* and *L. c. mericana*.—JUNIOUS HENDERSON, *Boulder, Col.*

**Occurrence of a White-winged Crossbill at Oxen Hill, Md., in August.**—

On August 13, 1907, Mr. Ernest Kletsch, of the Department of Agriculture, brought me a White-winged Crossbill (*Loxia leucoptera*) that had been accidentally killed the day previous at Oxen Hill, Maryland, about four or five miles southeast of Washington, D. C. Taken in connection with the record (mentioned elsewhere in these notes by Nelson R. Wood) of a White-throated Sparrow in the grounds of the Smithsonian Institution at about the same time, this occurrence of a northern bird in midsummer in the vicinity of Washington suggested a possibility of special significance, but no further unusual records have come to my attention and I merely mention the incident as a curious instance of irregularity. It would be of interest to know if similar observations were made elsewhere.—HENRY OLDYS, *Washington, D. C.*

**The Vesper Sparrow (*Poæetes gramineus*) on Long Island, N. Y., in Winter.**—In order to confirm Mr. J. T. Nichols's observation published in 'The Auk,' Vol. XXIV, p. 220, I wish to record four specimens in my collection taken on Feb. 7, 1905, near the northern part of Jamaica Bay, from a flock of these birds found roaming the snow covered fields.—J. A. WEBER, *New York City.*

**A White-throated Sparrow in Washington, D. C., in August.**—On the morning of August 9 a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) flew down into the grass near where I was sitting and remained in plain view for some time, about fifteen feet from me. It was in moult, as a part of its tail was gone. Wishing other witness to this, I asked Mr. William Palmer to visit the spot. He, too, saw it. The next morning found me, with field glass in hand, again at the place, and to my joy the bird was still there. I called Mr. Oldys, who was passing, and handed him the glass. He also saw and identified the bird. Is it not unusual for this bird to be here in this season, and does it not point to the fact that birds migrate when in moult? —NELSON R. WOOD, *Washington, D. C.*

**Nesting of the Rose-breasted Grosbeak in Philadelphia County, Pa.**—The Rose-breasted Grosbeak (*Zamelodia ludoviciana*) was formerly regarded as a migrant of transient occurrence in the Lower Delaware Valley (see Stone's 'Birds of Eastern Pennsylvania and New Jersey,' page 6), and not until late years was it found to be a summer resident of the Carolinian